

September 12, 2002

Gena Pirtle and Bob Deutsch
Cisco Philanthropy
250 Apollo Drive
Chelmsford, MA 07824

Dear Gena and Bob,

This is to offer my strongest endorsement for Community Voice Mail in their requests for funding by Cisco Philanthropy and the support of ECSBU. Soon after I joined Active Voice (AV) in 1991, the company began its long involvement as a primary sponsor for Community Voice Mail (CVM). When I first heard of CVM, it was one of those “wow” moments: the idea was simple and amazingly effective, the teamwork by AV volunteers was inspiring, and the success stories we heard were moving and satisfying.

Along with many other folks, I took enormous pride in our early contributions and strong support as Active Voice. Fundamentally, it was our voice mail product—our really hard work—underneath the covers that help make CVM a success. It was particularly satisfying to see Jenn Brandon and Bard Richmond (former AV CEO) recognized by President Clinton.

Like many others in ECSBU, I felt deep disappointment when the acquisition severed the basic product level relationship. I knew that Unity had the potential to become a powerful new engine for CVM. Today, with the AV Repartee product, CVM relies on a platform that has not been improved significantly in over a decade. While functional, the potential offered by the Internet, voice and data convergence, and a whole new world of communication is just not possible.

Our deep investment in Unity over the past five years can have a profound impact on CTI and CVM. Reliability, availability and scalability improvements will allow CTI to centralize CVM services. This will significantly reduce operating costs that can be reinvested in expanding the number of cities and people served. As a unified communications platform, working together with other Cisco AVVID products, Unity will make it possible for CTI to offer beneficial new features and expand to entirely new service areas.

You also have my personal commitment to evangelize CVM within Cisco. To me, the most exciting potential that comes from Cisco support of this program lies in the people power of Cisco worldwide.

In addition I see strong synergies with key Cisco partners. I am equally excited by the opportunity to reach out to our service provider partners—since they can directly contribute public network services and infrastructure that would dramatically increase the reach and power of CVM.

Thank you for your consideration. I believe CTI offers a unique opportunity for our sponsorship: Cisco products can directly touch and improve the lives of people in crisis, in pain, and in need.

Respectfully,

Kevin L. Chestnut
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